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Amateur Home Decoration.

Edward Dewson, del.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

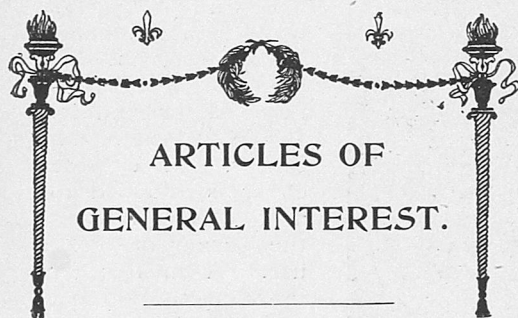
Subscribers who are either building new houses or are contemplating re-decorating their present homes, are invited to write us for information regarding color harmony and artistic schemes of furnishing. We employ trained skill to solve all questions of interior decoration.

In compliance with the wishes of many of our correspondents to purchase housefurnishing goods in New York, we notify our readers that we have organized a Purchasing Department, and are prepared to purchase goods at prices quoted, without making any charge therefor. We strongly advise those who write to us for decorative color schemes to carefully consider our advice, with the samples of the various materials in hand, which we invariably send with each

reply, so that their minds will be fully made up when they ask us to purchase the goods, and know that every item of their order is the result of a definite decision. It is impossible to exchange goods after the materials have been cut and shipped, and we hope, in all cases, that the goods as ordered, when sent will be accepted and paid for.

Correspondents when writing us are particularly requested to embody a reply to the following points in their letters:

1. Write legibly and on one side of the paper.
2. Send copy of architect's plan or a rough sketch of the plan of the house, showing size, height and arrangement of rooms, with the north and south aspects clearly indicated.
3. Give particulars of existing wood-work, mentioning the nature of the trim, floor, cornice, picture-moldings and mantel in each room; state what must be retained, and what, if any, specified articles of furniture are desired.
4. State separately the maximum outlay permissible for wall treatments, ceiling decoration (if any), textile hangings, carpets and furniture.
5. Send brief notes of the house, its location, age and environment, and such particulars of the owner's tastes and sentiments bearing upon the matter as would be discovered from a personal interview.
6. Send ten two-cent stamps if samples of paper, carpets, draperies, etc. are desired by mail, otherwise we must express same at inquirer's expense.



ARTICLES OF GENERAL INTEREST.

HOW TO MAKE A WRITING BLOCK.

A MOST charming and useful present which is easily and quickly made, and equally suitable for a lady or gentleman, consists of a writing block fitted with note paper, envelopes, note-book, pen, ink, etc., and all the accessories required for letter writing. The block should be made by a joiner, and carefully spliced around the edges to prevent the wood from warping, and should measure twenty-four inches by sixteen inches, the board should be made about half an inch in thickness. Having got your board, procure some cloth or serge, elastic and Russia leather—which can be bought at any bookbinder's—cut out a piece of cloth big enough to cover it, allowing an inch over all around for the turning. Draw the cloth tightly enough to prevent wrinkles, and fasten it to the back of the block with furniture tacks to keep it firm; and round the edges of the board, at intervals of half an inch, put in small brass-headed nails.

Now turn over the board and line the back with a piece of black linen, or sateen nailed on, to keep it neat.

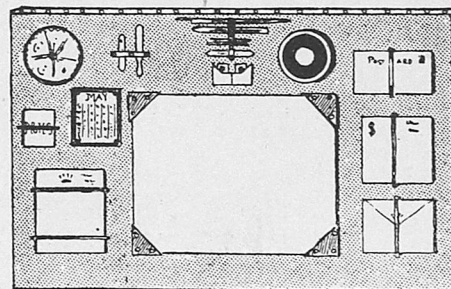
With regard to filling up the front of the block; first of all make a blotting pad in the following way:—Cut out some pieces of white blotting paper, seven inches by nine and one-half inches, and fasten these to the board, exactly in the centre, but near the bottom, by means of four corners of leather cut out in triangular shape, each corner of which should be attached by three brass-headed nails, so that the blotting paper will slip in easily, and can be changed when required.

Exactly above the blotter cut out a little case for stamps of the leather and fasten it on with brass nails; and higher up still attach, by means of a piece of elastic, pen, pencil, sealing wax and india-rubber, each loop for which should be separated by a brass nail.

Down the right side of the board arrange at equal intervals, fastening them on by elastic, post-cards, correspondence cards, and envelopes, the latter not to be less than two inches from the bottom of the block; and at the right-hand corner of the blotting paper, nail one of the little traveling ink-stands firmly to the board by means of a screw driven through the bottom of the ink-stand. Now make a little round pen-wiper, the top layer to consist of leather and underneath this several folds of cloth, and fasten this at the top left-hand corner of the board by a nail, and immediately below it arrange a note-book, and almanac. The latter looks best fastened by means of a frame work of leather. Below these again put the writing paper, which should be held

in place by two strips of elastic, fastened by nails. A paper knife, pen knife and little case for pens should be added and certainly fill up. If cloth be chosen to cover the board, brown will be found a good, useful shade, and elastic can easily be bought to match; and leather, either Morocco or Russia (the latter is to be preferred, being softer and thinner) can be procured to match exactly. Little ink-stands of brass can be bought and covered at home, or at a watch manufacturer's, with the same leather as that taken for the fittings for the block.

The writer has seen pencil, penholder, sealing-wax and note-book all brown, which lightened by the brass-headed nails formed a very handsome block.



A HOME-MADE WRITING TABLE.

NOVELTIES FOR THE TABLE.

MANY decorative adjuncts to the operations of refreshing the inner man have been originated, and it is with pleasure that we draw attention to further novelties belonging to the same class, from that source. These take the form of tea, coffee, and liqueur sets of an eminently decorative as well as utilitarian character, three of which are represented in the accompanying illustrations. These are named the "Parisian," the "Olympian," and the "Venetian" respectively, while the "Ceylon" and the "Turkish" are other designs, equally admirable, which space will not permit us to reproduce. The "Parisian" is



THE "OLYMPIAN" COFFEE SET.

made in polished brass, with circular hammered tray, and includes tea-pot, coffee-pot, cream-jug, and sugar-basin (plated inside), tea-kettle, stand, and lamp. The same design may also be had in copper to order. The "Olympian" has a hammered polished copper tray, coffee-pot, cream-jug and sugar-basin (plated inside), and two china coffee-cups in copper stands; while the "Venetian," with its gondola tray, which can be had either in copper or brass as preferred, has copper vessels as previously described, and two cups and saucers. The "Turkish," which makes a very handsome set, has a hammered polished tray, coffee-pot, cream-jug, and sugar-basin (plated inside), cigarette vase, two cups and saucers, cut liqueur decanter, and two glasses. Any of these five patterns are made in electroplate for those whose tastes do not run in the direction of brass and copper, and in any case they must appeal to those who can appreciate a thoroughly well-made, handsome set.

MUSICAL GLASSES.

IN THE quaint old town of Nuremberg some instruments are preserved, known now as harmonicas, which were played with the moistened finger; but I think the instrument best known is that which the composer Gluck is said to have invented, and which, by the name of the "musical glasses," was all the rage in England in 1746. Gluck arranged twenty-six glasses irregularly filled with clear spring water, and upon these he played a variety of music with his fingers slightly moistened. In the *Vicar of Wakefield* the fashionable London ladies are described as able to "talk of nothing but high life . . . pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses," while Horace Walpole, writing the same year, 1746, to his friend Mann, refers to Gluck's performance, but says he thinks he has heard of something of the same kind before. But it was to our own Benjamin Franklin that the improved or perfected harmonica is due. He was in London eleven years after Gluck's visit, and found a Mr. Puckerage performing on these musical glasses, very well, it is

true, but Franklin at once said that something better could be done.

Accordingly he put his scientific wits to work, and the result was an instrument he called the armonica, to which an "h" was added, as being more appropriate, and on this many celebrated musicians performed. It consisted of basins of glass strung on an iron spindle, the lower edge dipped into a trough of water. As an improvement on Gluck's method, Franklin regulated the pitch of the tone by the size of the glasses, not the amount of water in or under them. Mozart and many other well-known composers did not disdain to write for the harmonica, and in 1788 a "Method" for students was compiled. The very simplicity, however, of the instrument made it easy of imitation and improvement. Wood and glass with straw were combined under various names.

SINGULAR CLOCKS.

IN AN answer to a correspondent who asks, "What is the most curious material out of which a time-piece has been made?" a London journal prints the following rather interesting item.

"Bread, we think, is the most curious material out of which a clock has ever been



THE "VENETIAN" COFFEE SET.

constructed. There was, and may still be, in Milan a clock made of bread. The maker was a native of Milan, who devoted three years of his time to the task. He was very poor, and being without means to purchase the necessary metal for the making of a clock, he sat apart regularly a portion of his bread each day, eating the crust and saving the soft part. To solidify this he made use of a certain salt, and when the various pieces were dry they became perfectly hard and insoluble in water. The clock was of good size, and kept fair time.

"Another strange clock was exhibited some years ago in Liverpool. It was constructed of pins, buttons, and all sorts of odds and ends by a pauper named Mercer. The maker of this extraordinary time-piece thus describes it himself: The back and the front of the clock were made from iron bed-laths, while the barrel was part of a large brass ferule, the ends being brass buttons hammered out. The barrel arbor had originally been the blade of a shoemaker's awl; the main and several other wheels were nothing more nor less than suspender buttons from the maker's own trousers, while the cog teeth were portions of bygone knitting-needles. The teeth of the centre wheels had been boot-rivets. In the dial there were one hundred separate pieces."

FOR THE home maker who values her table decorations there is a vegetable dish of special designs, a lemonade pitcher of a certain ware, artistic in shape, and gorgeous in gilt. Also, there is an asparagus set which as a choice article cannot be equalled. There are boxes on which the portrait of the donor can be painted and prove a lasting joy to the giver. This for the bon-bon box is a special novelty of the season.

THERE ARE baskets in all shapes and grades of straw, cane-silk satin and paper. Of every size, of every form, with an abundance of ribbons tied in all sorts of odd shapes. Powder boxes, pin trays, match safes, and all the knick-knacks which form for a woman a convenience, and each one either filled with the best of sweets or a box, accompanies the gift. The candy-makers rivalling each other in these dainty and delicious confections.

THE PIECE of embroidery still holds its own as an Easter present from the small doily to the tablecover wherein a splendid show is made. This season, embroidery has become an art, more so than ever before. To embroider the rose a woman must have the gift of painting, the art of knowing how to give the light and shade to each petal, the curl of the leaf should be clearly defined, the stem have all the appearance of the one which nature holds out to us, and when finished it becomes the semblance of a real natural rose, with all beauty and all its choice of colors.

A PRETTY device for an Easter table is to have in the centre a small basket, the inside covered with straw on which rest many colored eggs. Each egg can be labelled with the name of some member of the family, and underneath this bed of straw and eggs can be simple presents of light expense. Trifles in silver, homemade articles which always find a place, tasteful accessories for the toilet, and pretty novelties that can be picked up everywhere for little money.



THE "PARISIAN" COFFEE AND TEA SET.

THERE WILL be every plan utilized in the sending of flowers, the day being often the excuse for bestowing a gift more precious in its character than the season would warrant. Easter, nowadays has much of the semblance of Christmas in the presenting of gifts.

